United Nations A/60/972–S/2006/630

General Assembly
Security Council

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General Assembly
Sixtieth session
Agenda item 14
The situation in the Middle East

Security Council
Sixty-first year

Identical letters dated 9 August 2006 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Lebanon to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

On instructions from my Government, and with reference to my previous letters on the continuous Israeli aggression against Lebanon and its people, I regret to inform you that Israeli air forces targeted a residential building in Shiyyah, Beirut. The Israeli air strike led to the complete destruction of two residential buildings, thereby killing 41 civilians, mostly women and children, and wounding 60 more.

This new massacre which comes on the heels of the second Qana massacre is part of a series of persistent and deliberate Israeli violations of international law, including humanitarian and human rights law, in particular the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War of 12 August 1949.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 14, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Caroline **Ziade**
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

06-46106 (E) 090806

United Nations A/60/973

General Assembly

Distr.: General
10 August 2006

Original: English

Sixtieth session
Agenda items 42, 49, 54 (a), 86, 106, 107 and 108

Global Agenda for Dialogue among Civilizations

Information and communication technologies for development

Globalization and interdependence: globalization and interdependence

Developments in the field of information and telecommunications in the context of international security

Crime prevention and criminal justice

International drug control

Measures to eliminate international terrorism

Letter dated 4 August 2006 from the Permanent Representative of Kyrgyzstan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

On behalf of the Permanent Missions of the following States Members of the United Nations, which are also members of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, the Russian Federation, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, I have the honour, as a representative of the country chairing the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, to forward herewith the declaration on the occasion of the fifth anniversary of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and the statement of the Heads of member States of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization on international information security, which were adopted on 15 June 2006 in Shanghai (see annexes I and II).

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda items 42, 49, 54 (a), 86, 106, 107 and 108.

(*Signed*) Ulan **Djusupov**
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

06-46362 (E) 150806 150806

Annex I to the letter dated 4 August 2006 from the Permanent Representative of Kyrgyzstan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

[Original: Russian]

Declaration on the occasion of the fifth anniversary of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization

(Shanghai, 15 June 2006)

On the occasion of the fifth anniversary of the establishment of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, the heads of its member States — President Nursultan Nazarbaev of the Republic of Kazakhstan, President Hu Jintao of the People's Republic of China, President Kurmanbek Bakiev of the Kyrgyz Republic, President Vladimir Putin of the Russian Federation, President Emomali Rakhmonov of the Republic of Tajikistan and President Islam Karimov of the Republic of Uzbekistan — met in Shanghai, the organization's birthplace, and stated as follows:

I

The Shanghai Cooperation Organization was founded in Shanghai five years ago pursuant to a strategic decision made by its member States to meet the challenges and threats of the twenty-first century and bring about durable peace and sustainable development of the region. This decision, which ushered in a new historical phase of regional cooperation, is of great importance to the establishment and maintenance of peace and stability and the creation of an inclusive environment for cooperation in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization region.

With major events and changes taking place in the international and regional environment, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization has become an important mechanism for deepening good-neighbourly cooperation, friendship and partnership among its members. It is a good example of dialogue among civilizations and an active force for promoting democracy in international relations.

II

Through its endeavour over the past few years, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization has laid a solid foundation for its steady and sustained progress and gained extensive international recognition.

1. The Shanghai Cooperation Organization has completed building of an institutional and legal framework which ensures effective fulfilment of its functions.

2. It has carried out close security cooperation, focusing on addressing non-traditional security threats and challenges such as fighting terrorism, separatism, extremism and drug trafficking.

3. It has adopted long-term plans and set directions for regional economic cooperation and identified the goals, priority areas and major tasks of such cooperation. It has set up the Shanghai Cooperation Organization Business Council and the Interbank Association.

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4. Adhering to the principles of openness, not targeting particular individuals and not forming alliances, it has actively engaged in dialogue, exchange and cooperation in various forms with countries and international organizations that, like the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, are ready to carry out cooperation on an equal, mutually respectful and constructive basis to safeguard regional peace, security and stability.

The Shanghai Cooperation Organization owes its successful development to its consistent adherence to the guiding principles of the "Spirit of Shanghai", mutual trust, mutual benefit, equality, consultation, respect for the diversity of cultures and aspiration towards common development. This spirit is the underlying philosophy and the most important code of conduct of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. It enriches the theory and practice of contemporary international relations and embodies the shared aspiration of the international community for the democratization of international relations. The "Spirit of Shanghai" is therefore of critical importance to the international community's pursuit of a new and non-confrontational model of international relations, a model that calls for discarding the Cold War mentality and transcending ideological differences.

The Shanghai Cooperation Organization will remain dedicated to the goals and principles established at its founding and strengthened in the documents, declarations and statements adopted thereafter.

III

The world situation and international relations today are going through unprecedented and profound changes. The trend towards multipolarization and economic globalization is developing in an unpredictable way, with twists and turns. The establishment of a new international order in the twenty-first century is a slow and uneven process. Countries are growing ever more interlinked and interdependent. The international community has unique opportunities for lasting, peaceful and comprehensive development, but is also confronted with complicated and interwoven traditional and non-traditional issues, challenges and threats.

The Shanghai Cooperation Organization is committed to enhancing strategic stability, strengthening the international regime of non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and upholding the international legal order, and will make its contribution to accomplishing these important missions.

The Shanghai Cooperation Organization holds that the United Nations remains the world's most representative, authoritative and universal organization. It is therefore called upon to play a leading role in international affairs and place itself at the core of formulating and implementing the basic norms of international law. The United Nations should improve efficiency and strengthen its capacity to respond to new threats and challenges by carrying out necessary reforms in light of the changing international environment in a rational and considered manner. In carrying out Security Council reform, the principles of equitable geographical distribution and seeking the broadest consensus should be observed. No time limit should be set for the reform, nor should any proposal over which there are major differences be imposed. The Shanghai Cooperation Organization is in favour of the next Secretary-General of the United Nations coming from the Asian regional group.

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Threats and challenges can be effectively met only by developing broad cooperation among all countries and international organizations concerned. What specific means and mechanism should be adopted to safeguard security of a region is the right and responsibility of countries in that region.

The Shanghai Cooperation Organization will make a constructive contribution to the establishment of a new global security architecture of mutual trust, mutual benefit, equality and mutual respect. Such architecture is based on the widely recognized principles of international law. It discards double standards and seeks to settle disputes through negotiation on the basis of mutual understanding. It respects the right of all countries to safeguard national unity and their national interests, to chart the course of their development and formulate domestic and foreign policies freely and independently and participate in international affairs on an equal basis.

The diversity of civilizations and models of development must be respected and upheld. Historical differences in culture and traditions, political and social systems, values and models of development should not be taken as pretexts to interfere in other countries' internal affairs. Models of social development should not be exported. Differences in civilizations should be respected, as should communication on a basis of equality, complementarity and harmonious coexistence.

IV

There is general stability in the Central Asian region. The States concerned have achieved historic success in political and economic reforms and social progress. The unique historical and cultural traditions of Central Asian nations deserve the respect and understanding of the international community. The Governments of Central Asian countries should be supported in their efforts to safeguard a consistent growth in security and stability, maintain social and economic development and people's well-being.

The Shanghai Cooperation Organization will continue to expand its potential and role, and work to stimulate cooperation between States and contribute more actively to building a peaceful, collaborative, open, prosperous and harmonious region.

The Shanghai Cooperation Organization member States will pass their friendship down through the generations and will not view each other as adversaries. They will develop comprehensive good-neighbourly relations of mutual respect and mutually beneficial cooperation. They will support each other in their principled positions on, and efforts in, safeguarding sovereignty, security and territorial integrity. They will not join any alliance or union that might undermine the sovereignty, security and territorial integrity of the member States. They will not allow their territories to be used to undermine the sovereignty, security or territorial integrity of other member States, and they will prohibit activities by organizations or groups in their territories that are detrimental to the interests of other member States. To this end, the member States will conduct, within the Shanghai Cooperation Organization framework, consultation on the conclusion of a multilateral legal document of long-term good-neighbourly relations, friendship and cooperation.

The member States will continue to strengthen coordination and cooperation in international and regional affairs to develop common positions on matters involving the Shanghai Cooperation Organization's interests.

The Shanghai Cooperation Organization has the potential to play an independent role in safeguarding stability and security in the region for which it is responsible. In case of emergencies that threaten regional peace, stability and security, member States will establish immediate contact and hold consultations on an effective joint response to fully protect the interests of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and its member States. The possibility of establishing a regional conflict prevention mechanism within the Shanghai Cooperation Organization framework will also be examined.

Comprehensively deepening cooperation in combating terrorism, separatism, extremism and drug trafficking is a priority area for the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. It will take steps to strengthen the Regional Counter-Terrorism Structure and carry out cooperation with relevant international groupings.

To further expand economic cooperation among them, SCO member States need to coordinate their efforts in implementing the Programme on Multilateral Trade and Economic Cooperation among Shanghai Cooperation Organization member States by carrying out major regional projects in priority economic fields, and by creating a favourable environment for trade and investment in order to gradually establish free movement of goods, capital, services and technologies.

The Shanghai Cooperation Organization welcomes participation by interested partners in specific projects in priority areas such as energy, transportation, information and communications and agriculture. The Shanghai Cooperation Organization will endeavour to actively participate in international campaigns against communicable diseases and contribute to environmental protection and rational use of natural resources.

An important means of ensuring the Shanghai Cooperation Organization's resilience and vitality is to strengthen and expand the social foundation for friendship and mutual understanding among member States. To this end, member States need to institutionalize existing bilateral and multilateral cooperation in areas including culture and art, education, sport, tourism and the media. With the unique and rich cultural heritage of the peoples of its member States, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization is fully able to serve as a catalyst and model in promoting dialogue among civilizations for the sake of resolving problems which stand in the way of harmonious international relations.

* * *

In issuing this Declaration on the occasion of the fifth anniversary of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, we, heads of the member States, are firm in the belief that the Shanghai Cooperation Organization will fully realize the noble objectives and missions declared at its establishment and contribute to the cause of peace, cooperation and development.

(*Signed*) Nursultan **Nazarbaev**
President of the Republic of Kazakhstan

(*Signed*) **Hu** Jintao
President of the People's Republic of China

(*Signed*) Kurmanbek **Bakiev**
President of the Kyrgyz Republic

(*Signed*) Vladimir **Putin**
President of the Russian Federation

(*Signed*) Emomali **Rakhmonov**
President of the Republic of Tajikistan

(*Signed*) Islam **Karimov**
President of the Republic of Uzbekistan

Annex II to the letter dated 4 August 2006 from the Permanent Representative of Kyrgyzstan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

[Original: Russian]

Statement of the Heads of the member States of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization on international information security

(Shanghai, 15 June 2006)

The heads of the member States of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (hereinafter referred to as "SCO" or "the organization") — the Republic of Kazakhstan, the People's Republic of China, the Kyrgyz Republic, the Russian Federation, the Republic of Tajikistan and the Republic of Uzbekistan, met in Shanghai on 15 June 2006 and made the following statement.

The rapid development and extensive application of new information and communication technology (ICT) is one of the most important features of the world today. Reaching into all areas of human activity, information and communication technology has created a global information environment that has a direct impact on the political, economic, defence-related, sociocultural and other aspects of national security and of the wider system of international security and stability. The information environment is becoming a factor which shapes the vitality of society, and information is one of a country's most valuable assets and most important political and economic resources.

The heads of State believe that information and communication technology has created enormous potential to develop individuals' capabilities and to achieve human rights and freedoms more fully. Such technology opens up new opportunities, and encourages the emergence of new instruments to enable the State and society to operate more efficiently and to establish a global partnership for sustainable development, security and prosperity.

Meanwhile, the Heads of State express their concern at the present genuine threat that information and communication technology may be used in ways which could seriously harm the security of individuals, societies and States and undermine the basic principles of equality, mutual respect, non-interference in the internal affairs of sovereign States, peaceful settlement of disputes, non-use of force and respect for human rights. Moreover, the danger that information and communication technology could be used for criminal, terrorist and military/political ends that run counter to the maintenance of international security could manifest itself in a civilian or military context and result in serious political and socio-economic effects on a national, regional or worldwide scale, and in the destabilization of the societies of States.

The Heads of State recall the useful efforts their countries have made to enhance national information security. They nevertheless recognize the extensive negative impact of the destructive use of information and communication technology by criminals, terrorists, criminal and terrorist gangs and organizations, and even some countries, for military and political purposes, affecting other countries and sometimes even the whole world. The use of information and

communication technology for such purposes could cause global disaster on just as destructive a scale as an attack using weapons of mass destruction.

The Heads of State emphasize that information and communication technology should not only act as a carrier in the information world, but also, more importantly, promote closer ties and better integration among diverse cultures and civilizations, in circumstances of respect for religious sensitivities and people's traditions, across the territories of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and elsewhere.

The Heads of State also emphasize that the transnational nature of information and communication technology and contemporary threats and challenges makes it imperative for States to step up their information security efforts through joint action at bilateral, regional and international levels. Only with coordinated and complementary measures will States be able to respond suitably to information-related threats and challenges to security.

The Heads of State consequently support United Nations efforts to examine current and potential information security threats and ways to eliminate them, and to investigate suitable international proposals aimed at strengthening security of the global information and telecommunication systems; they deem it important to continue those efforts.

The Heads of State welcome the adoption by the General Assembly at its sixtieth — anniversary — session of resolution 60/45, of 8 December 2005, on developments in the field of information and telecommunications in the context of international security, and express their willingness to promote the implementation of the recommendations it makes.

The Heads of State declare that the member States hold similar positions on key issues concerning international information security and intend to work in concert within the framework of SCO to cope with new information challenges and threats while abiding by international law, including the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. With this in mind, the Heads of State have decided to establish a group of experts on international information from the SCO member States, involving representatives of the SCO Secretariat and the Executive Committee of the SCO Regional Counter-Terrorism Structure, to formulate a plan of action for international information security and define ways and means to tackle all aspects of international information security issues within the framework of the organization.

(*Signed*) Nursultan **Nazarbaev**
President of the Republic of Kazakhstan

(*Signed*) **Hu** Jintao
President of the People's Republic of China

(*Signed*) Kurmanbek **Bakiev**
President of the Kyrgyz Republic

(*Signed*) Vladimir **Putin**
President of the Russian Federation

(*Signed*) Emomali **Rakhmonov**
President of the Republic of Tajikistan

(*Signed*) Islam **Karimov**
President of the Republic of Uzbekistan

United Nations A/60/974–S/2006/639

General Assembly
Security Council

Distr.: General
11 August 2006

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General Assembly
Sixtieth session
Agenda item 14
The situation in the Middle East

Security Council
Sixty-first year

Identical letters dated 11 August 2006 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Lebanon to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

Annex to the identical letters dated 11 August 2006 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Lebanon to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

On instructions from my Government, I have the honour to forward to your attention the Seven-Point Plan put forth by Fuad Siniora, Prime Minister of Lebanon, in Rome on Wednesday, 26 July 2006, and later adopted by the Lebanese Council of Ministers. This Plan calls for an immediate and comprehensive ceasefire and a declaration of agreement on the following points:

1. An undertaking to release the Lebanese and Israeli prisoners and detainees through the International Committee of the Red Cross.

2. The withdrawal of the Israeli army behind the Blue Line, and the return of the displaced to their villages.

3. A commitment from the Security Council to place the Shebaa Farms area and the Kfarshouba Hills under United Nations jurisdiction until border delineation and Lebanese sovereignty over them are fully settled. While in United Nations custody, the area will be accessible to Lebanese property owners there. Further, Israel surrenders all remaining landmine maps in South Lebanon to the United Nations.

4. The Lebanese Government extends its authority over its territory through its own legitimate armed forces, so that there will be no weapons or authority other than that of the Lebanese State, as stipulated in the Taef national reconciliation document.

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5. The United Nations international force, operating in South Lebanon, is supplemented and enhanced in numbers, equipment, mandate and scope of operation, as needed, in order to undertake urgent humanitarian and relief work and guarantee stability and security in the South so that those who fled their homes can return.

6. The United Nations, in cooperation with the relevant parties, undertakes the necessary measures to once again put into effect the Armistice Agreement signed by Lebanon and Israel in 1949, and to ensure adherence to the provisions of that agreement, as well as to explore possible amendments to or development of said provisions, as necessary.

7. The international community commits to support Lebanon on all levels, and to assist it in facing the tremendous burden resulting from the human, social and economic tragedy that has afflicted the country, especially in the areas of relief, reconstruction and rebuilding of the national economy.

I would be grateful if you could have the present letter circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 14, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Caroline **Ziade**
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

United Nations A/60/974–S/2006/639*

General Assembly
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General Assembly
Sixtieth session
Agenda item 14
The situation in the Middle East

Security Council
Sixty-first year

Identical letters dated 11 August 2006 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Lebanon to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

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* Reissued for technical reasons.

06-46477* (E) 140806

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I would be grateful if you could have the present letter circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 14, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Caroline **Ziade**
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

06-46477

United Nations

A/60/975–S/2006/642

General Assembly
Security Council

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11 August 2006

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General Assembly
Sixtieth session
Agenda item 40
The situation in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan

Security Council
Sixty-first year

Letter dated 10 August 2006 from the Permanent Representative of Azerbaijan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I am writing in response to the letter dated 27 July 2006 from the Permanent Representative of Armenia to the United Nations regarding the massive fires in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan (A/60/961-S/2006/588).

It is noteworthy that the Permanent Representative of Armenia distributed, as an official document of the United Nations, the Report on fires, which had been released by the OSCE Chairman-in-Office to the parties as a confidential document. Moreover, he arbitrarily annexed the Report with the list of attachments that are not related to it.

As to the misstatement of "groundless accusations" against his country, it suffices to recall that the OSCE Fact-Finding Mission, dispatched in 2005 to the occupied territories of Azerbaijan, confirmed the facts of the Armenian settlement of the occupied territories of Azerbaijan. The following Minsk Group Chairmanship's recommendations — "**The Co-Chairs discourage any further settlements in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan. The Co-Chairs urge the parties to accelerate negotiations toward a political settlement in order, inter alia, to address the problem of settlers and to avoid changes in the demographic structure of the region, which would make more difficult any future efforts to achieve a negotiated settlement**" — speak for themselves (A/59/747-S/2005/187, annex I).

As for the allegations that Azerbaijan tries "to create an 'emergency situation' out of a usual natural phenomenon of grass fires occurring yearly in the region in the hottest period of the summer", I invite the Armenian Ambassador to merely glance at the satellite images of the fire-affected occupied territories of Azerbaijan (A/60/911-S/2006/450).

Furthermore, the comparison of satellite images of 2005 and 2006 has proven clearly that in 2005 these territories were not touched by fire. Satellite images confirm that the scope, character and way of spreading of fires have been of intentional and artificial origin. The fact that the fires have affected exclusively the

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occupied territories all along the front-line is yet another proof to that conclusion. Due to the absence of experts in the OSCE Mission as acknowledged by the Report itself, "it was not possible to present a broader assessment."

In paragraph 4 of the letter, the Permanent Representative of Armenia, out of his will and desire, confirms the fact of occupation of the territories of Azerbaijan despite his initial intention to state different.

As far as the so-called "duly elected authorities" are concerned, let me remind the rejection of the so-called "parliamentary elections" held on 19 June 2005 by the international community, in particular, Russia and France, Co-Chairs of the Minsk Group, which stated that they support the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan, and did not recognize Nagorny Karabakh as an independent state (A/59/862-S/2005/426).

Another point in the above-mentioned letter — "intensive negotiations between the parties to the conflict" — should be dismissed. It is well-known that no negotiations are being conducted at the present stage and the issue of "the self-determination" has not been a subject of negotiations.

Disapproving cynical attempt to present the massive fires in the occupied territories as "a usual natural phenomenon of grass fires", Azerbaijan reiterates that severe damage has been inflicted to the environment of these territories, having seriously undermined its fragile ecosystem, including soil, flora and fauna. In its conclusion the Report on fires states itself that "**there is a lack of proper fire-fighting equipment on both sides and in some places the sources of water were not sufficiently close. International assistance for this would be helpful.**"

No comments.

Apparently, urgent measures are needed to suppress the fires, to overcome their detrimental consequences and rehabilitate the fire-affected territories. Azerbaijan considers it as a matter of the most urgent priority and calls upon the international community to conduct an environmental operation through the participation of the relevant international organizations and the parties themselves. This kind of operation and mutual interaction could establish CBMs between the parties.

I should be grateful if the present letter were urgently distributed as a document of the General Assembly under item 40 of the agenda of its sixtieth session and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Yashar **Aliyev**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

United Nations A/60/976–S/2006/638

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Security Council

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General Assembly
Sixtieth session
Agenda items 12 and 32

Prevention of armed conflict

Comprehensive review of the whole question of peacekeeping operations in all their aspects

Security Council
Sixty-first year

Identical letters dated 11 August 2006 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Georgia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to request your kind assistance in circulating as a document of the sixtieth session of the General Assembly, under agenda items 12 and 32, and of the Security Council, the statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia of 10 August 2006 on the latest developments in Abkhazia, Georgia (see annex).

(*Signed*) Kaha **Chitaia**
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

06-46521 (E) 210806

Annex to the identical letters dated 11 August 2006 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Georgia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

Statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia

Additional armed troops, which were deployed by the Abkhazian side in the villages of the lower Gali district, force local Georgians to dig trenches for separatist armed formations, following the instructions of the Abkhazian administration in the Gali district.

It is a vivid example of forced labour banned unequivocally by all international human rights documents, including Article 8 of the Pact on Civil and Political Rights, Convention N 105 of the International Labour Organization and Article 4 of the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms.

All these international agreements represent an integral part of the Georgian legislation and are legally binding throughout the entire territory of Georgia, including Abkhazia. Besides, the Protocol under paragraph 4 of the Moscow Agreement of 14 May, 1994 stipulates that the CIS peacekeeping forces, while performing their functions, are obliged to comply with the requirements of Georgia's domestic laws and regulations.

However, Russian peacekeepers continue to act in defiance of their mandated obligations, turning a blind eye to gross violation of law and human rights taking place in their very presence.

We call upon the CIS peacekeeping forces and their leadership to employ all means at their disposal in order to put an immediate end to the use of forced labour on the territory of Abkhazia, Georgia.

We also urge the UN Observer Mission in Georgia, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights and the international community to give due assessment to the efforts of the separatist regime and their patrons acting under the cover of 'peacekeepers', which aim at introducing the much-maligned GULAG practices in one of the regions of Georgia – Abkhazia.

At the same time, the existing situation in the Gali district leads us to register once more the incapability (or the absence of will) of the CIS peacekeeping forces to duly perform their functions, which points yet again to the necessity of modifying the existing format of peace operation and the legislative basis.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia condemns the separatist regime's unlawful practices and the inaction of the CIS peacekeepers and believes that in contrast with our dedicated efforts to establish stability and achieve a peaceful resolution of the conflict, the acts of the Abkhazian side lay bare the genuine character of their destructive and aggressive goals and aspirations.

Tbilisi, August 10, 2006

United Nations A/60/977

General Assembly

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General Assembly
Sixtieth session
Agenda item 55 (b)
Groups of countries in special situations: Specific actions related to the particular needs and problems of landlocked developing countries: outcome of the International Ministerial Conference of Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries and Donor Countries and International Financial and Development Institutions on Transit Transport Cooperation

Letter dated 10 August 2006 from the Permanent Representative of Armenia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Over the past few years, Turkey and Azerbaijan have been pushing forward for a politically motivated project aimed at connecting Turkey and Azerbaijan via Georgia in circumvention of the existing extensive network of railroads in the region. The reluctance to make use of the rail links in place and persistence in building a new line designed to bypass the territory of Armenia speaks to the fact that the sole objective of the proposed railroad is to exclude Armenia from participation in regional projects in the South Caucasus, a standing policy of both Azerbaijan and Turkey.

The fact of the matter is that the existing railroad linking Turkey, Armenia, Georgia and Azerbaijan makes the new costly project economically not viable. The proposed project is estimated to cost upwards of $800 million and is expected to take years to construct. Yet the existing line between Gyumri (Armenia) and Kars (Turkey) is in working condition and could become operational in a matter of weeks at very little cost.

The Kars-Gyumri railroad, however, is not being utilized today because of Turkey's and Azerbaijan's unilateral blockade of Armenia's eastern and western borders for over a decade, which resulted in an existing and functional railroad being excluded from the regional transit network.

In political terms, in a conflict-torn region such as the South Caucasus, divisive policies can in no way contribute to the establishment of trust, and confidence-building among the regional actors. In this respect, the proposed railroad project would not enhance the prospects for achieving peace and stability in the

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region. Given the evidently negative impact that could be entailed by the new railroad, Armenia has repeatedly declared its strong opposition to the project.

It comes as no surprise that a recent move by the United States House of Representatives ensures that such divisive projects do not receive United States support. The Export-Import Bank Reauthorization Act of 2006 (H.R. 5068) adopted on 25 July 2006, specifies that the United States would not provide any assistance to the promotion and development of a railroad project sponsored by Azerbaijan and Turkey that would connect three countries of the region and exclude Armenia.

The legislation includes an amendment, which was unanimously approved by the House Financial Services Committee last month. The amendment states that the Export-Import Bank — a federal government agency providing loans, loan guarantees and insurance to support export of United States goods and services to international markets — "shall not guarantee, insure, extend credit or participate in an extension of credit in connection with the development or promotion of any rail connections or railway-related connections that do not traverse or connect with Armenia, and do traverse or connect Baku, Azerbaijan, Tbilisi, Georgia, and Kars Turkey".

Armenia welcomes adoption by the United States House of Representatives of H.R. 5068 and believes that this legislation is a genuine effort to promote confidence among the nations of the South Caucasus region and develop comprehensive regional cooperation.

I should be grateful if you would have the text of the present letter circulated as a document of the sixtieth session of the General Assembly under agenda item 55 (b).

(*Signed*) Armen **Martirosyan**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative